

year following a deficiency of the same amount, and that set us about right."

Moreover, since the date of these statistics, we find that at the half-yearly meeting of the company, held the other day, there "being an excess of net income over the year ending 30th June, 1846, of 3,730l. 5s.," the directors "recommended that the usual dividend at the rate of 10l. per share per annum [the restricted maximum] be now declared;" and after the chairman had stated that "the proprietors had every reason to congratulate themselves on the condition and prospects of the company," it was announced that "by the increase of the consumption of the company's gas a [further] reduction in price [below the maximum of 4s. 6d.] might be expected;" this, too, in the face of a further rise of coal to "16s. or 17s."

Now it is well worthy of remark, that notwithstanding an increase in the production and sale of gas, in consequence of these reductions, to the extent of no less than 100 per cent.,—"in many instances persons having doubled their lights since the price was reduced," besides freely consuming double the quantity of gas, or nearly so, in the lights previously used, while in instances still more numerous, the use of gas has extended to a lower and still lower class of houses in exact proportion to its reduction in price,—yet even at the present day, with all this vast compensatory diffusion, 40,000 inhabited houses, out of 54,000, still remain to be supplied with gas! which, however, is "coming into operation even in the very poorest houses," so that the capability of increase in the diffusion, according to the reduction in price, has still a vast and almost illimitable field of operation over which to expand itself.

A more instructive precedent, either for the guidance of our great metropolitan monopolists, the Liverpool companies themselves, or the manufacturers of gas in general, cannot well be conceived. But it appears from the very evidence now adduced, that these parties in general stand doggedly and determinedly in their own light [proof of which, even from their own recognized organ, we shall offer anon], and that there is a very great prejudice amongst them against the introduction of even the ostensible means of cheapening the manufacture of their gas, about which they care as little, apparently, as do our water companies about ostensible means of cheapening the 'manufacture' of their water,—a fact, in explanation of which but one satisfactory reason can be offered, and for which we refer our readers to our last article.† But so inveterate is this 'prejudice' that an engineer, "connected with a high-priced gas company in London," who was somewhat strangely and unfortunately appointed to act as a Government commissioner on the claim of the Guardian Gas Company, and who, accordingly, 'damned' its prospects without compunction by an adverse report, and endeavoured too, much more officiously than officially, but by good fortune unsuccessfully, to prejudice the Taunton Gas Company against the cheap schemes which they had adopted,—is said to have acknowledged, on being previously requested to act as consulting engineer to this very Guardian Gas Company, that "it would be much to his detriment if he undertook any scheme for the making of cheap

gas!" We cannot in justice, however, refuse the credit of much more boldness and good sense, to the following significant appeal of the *Gas Gazette* of 10th ultimo, to its constituents, the 'powers of darkness' rather than of light, solemnly warning them to 'set their houses in order.'

"Were we inclined to flatter the interests which we profess to uphold, we might send up shouts of victory and safety [for what, does not satisfactorily appear, and would be indeed to flatter the interests so upheld]; but we have a more serious, and far less agreeable duty to perform. The times are out of joint, and we dare not sleep at our post. The reports of some of the Government surveyors have created, universally, an uneasy feeling, and there is an up-heaving of the whole body-politic on this subject, which betokens a movement, compared with which the storm just passed, was but as the 'half-gale,' of the temperate zone, compared with the hurricane of the torrid, or even with the earthquake itself. 'Coming events cast their shadows before them,' and our position enables us to see and observe these 'shadows,' and we pledge our reputation as public journalists to the fact, that in making this announcement, we do so on good and sufficient ground,—that we are not 'fighting with shadows,' but acting the part of faithful watchmen; and as such we would say, we be to those whom the coming storm finds unprepared. * * * Put your houses in order. Make gas cheap and sell it cheap; HAVE NO SECRETS. * * * MAKE YOUR CUSTOMERS YOUR FRIENDS. * * * But if no sufficient precautions be taken, if sagacity, forethought, justice, good management, and good feeling be thrown to the winds, we say it deliberately,—annihilation will follow,—the vessel will founder. We say emphatically, do not be lulled into false security; take steps in advance! nothing can be so false or so fatal, as to be compelled, forced, into any given course of action; and yet, until lately, what but this has been the history of every gas company in the empire, with some, very few, brilliant exceptions?"

Yes, the watchman is faithful to his duty; but with his sleeping charge awake? Will their downfall to the level of the public expectation be arrested, as he desires, by some snug little eminence within convenient reach of their present high-tower tops? We doubt it much; but however deaf and dormant they may be to the warning voice of a friend,—that the public, at least, are now wide awake to the approach of a new and bright, though artificial, day, the rapidity and the multiplicity of the diffusion of all our exposures of the secrets of the gas-house, through the ever-watchful press, abroad over all the length and breadth of the land, and beyond the mere limits of England, abundantly attests; as even also does the popular 'gossip' of the metropolis itself, so pleasantly detailed in many of our provincial papers, as the following from 'the Albion' will instance, while it will also perhaps assist in rousing up the sleepers themselves to a sense of what is due to that public who, they may depend on it, will now be satisfied with nothing short of what is proved to be within the actual bounds of possibility towards the establishment of a vast and unobstructed distribution of that light and heat which art and science, as well as nature, have presented them with, to cheer their gloom and to cherish and comfort their frame.

"An object of fierce agitation among the middle classes promises to be the reduction of the price of gas, towards which end a sort of league is being tacitly formed in London and various parts of the provinces, their grievances and determination finding able utterance in the columns of THE BUILDER, whose number of to-day discloses data connected with the selling and the cost price of the commodity, calculated to astound the Liverpool Guardian Company themselves, with whom the movement originated, and whose example is inciting so general imitation. Talk of 4s. 6d. and 3s. 9d. per 1,000 feet on a large consumption. What do you say to 51d. being the cost price of supplying a small consumption? Of course this will be laughed at as a monstrous piece of nonsense in your neighbourhood; but, before the facetious individuals indulge in too uproarious a degree of risibility, they would do well to turn to page 396 of the periodical just mentioned, and, under the head of "The Gas

Movement in the Forthcoming Parliament," they will, perhaps, find something calculated to moderate their cacchinary predilections, and give them something to think about. This same gas reformation is likely to be urged on the Government during the approaching session as pertinaciously as the Health of Towns' question, of which, indeed, it is an integral and essential portion, and ministers will hardly shrink from affording it all necessary consideration."

In fact, the first fruits of this great movement may be said to have been already reaped, and to have already afforded good promise of future abundance. The general 'Gas Act,' of 23rd April last, prescribing or restricting the limits of the distributed profits to 10 per cent. per annum, was the first fruit. Then followed the determination of the Parliamentary committees, even while affording the present companies a last chance of redeeming themselves in the public countenance and favour, to bind them down to certain acts of partial justice to the public such as excited the 'uneasy feeling' so plaintively alluded to; and the seeds of further fruits have been already sown in the new Parliament by the expurgation of committees from all parties interested, and by the *empresement* of the growing public opinion, and the accumulations of fact and reason in the present movement, both on the Government and on the Legislature.

We shall take an opportunity to call attention to the sort of gas dispensed by some of the companies, and the improvement that may, in this respect, be effected.

FOREIGN ARCHITECTURAL AND COL- LATERAL INTELLIGENCE.

Examination for State's Architects and Engineers in Bavaria.—If Europe gazes with complacency, nay admiration, at the structural creations of Bavaria, which now, by the Ludwigs canal, &c., have entered on the domain of public utility, we must not think that such has been done by enchantment and magic. Moreover, a Klenze—a Gartner, would have striven in vain to put their fancies (*Ideale*) into tangible shape, unless a number of inferiorities had been extant, to execute, and properly execute, their designs. Thus, the Bavarian *Gazette* (*Regierungsbblatt*) of 15th of June contains a government notification "of the theoretical examinations, in 1847, for the State's buildings service." The programme contains Latin, algebra up to the equations of the second degree, plain and descriptive geometry, drawing, mapping, and planning, the elements of natural history and chemistry, physics (mechanics, hydrostatics, &c.), with the usual branches of architecture, history of architecture, &c. It is to be observed, that most of these branches are taught regularly at the Munich University, where our professionals are entered like any other students of the learned professions. The ulterior and more immediate branches, then, and the practice, are taught at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts and the Building Institution. (*Bauschule*.)

Comte Laborde on the Palais Mazarin.—It is the great question of the rebuilding of the Paris library, which has been the cause of the above publication, of which the following is a brief outline:—

In the times of Cardinal Giulio Mazarini, the present Quartier Richelieu presented a very different aspect from what it has now, and was indicated on plans by the usual signs of fields and farms. The Palais Royal, which then was no continuous range of buildings and porticos, was quite close to the *petits champs*. It was from the window of the palais, that Mazarin saw, beyond the little fields, a hotel of fine appearance, which then belonged to President Tuboeuf. After being made the property of the premier, its appearance soon changed. Venice sent there its large mirrors, the Levant its huge carpets, China furnished porcelain, while dngs and horses were imported from England and Spain. After divers vicissitudes, the regent ordered the transfer of the royal library to the Palais Mazarin, where it has remained ever since.

In speaking on this individual palace, Mr. Laborde enters into a variety of disquisitions on

* Le Palais Mazarin et les grandes habitations de ville et camp parcs au 17^e siècle. Paris, 1847, 8c. in vrs.